

RULES FOR SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

1. A verb must agree with its subject in number.

EX. : A book is on the table.
My books are on the table.

2. The number of a verb does not change when one or more phrases come between a verb and its subject.

EX. : The box of grapes from Saratoga Farms was delivered today.

3. The words here, there, and where are not subjects. They introduce a sentence in inverted order. The verb must agree with the subject of a sentence.

EX. : Here is the package of letters.

4. A singular verb must be used with the singular indefinite pronouns each, neither, either, anyone, everyone, no one, someone, anybody, everybody, nobody, somebody, anything, everything, nothing, and something.

EX. : Neither of the houses is worth much.
Everyone is bringing his own car.

5. A singular verb must be used with the pronouns all, none, most, and enough if they mean how much; a plural verb, if they mean how many.

EX. : Some of the planes are ready.
Some of the food is delicious.

6. Some subjects, although they appear plural, are singular in meaning and take a singular verb.

EX. : The news seems more and more depressing every day.
Measles is the only childhood disease I haven't had.

7. A singular verb is generally used after works denoting an amount (time, money, measurement, weight, volume).

EX. : Three weeks is a long vacation.
Two weeks was all the vacation he got.

8. A singular verb is generally used after a collective noun. If the individuals of a group act separately, however, a plural verb must be used.

EX. : The jury was out an hour only.
The team have received *their* letters.

9. When the conjunction and connects the parts of compound subjects, the verb is generally plural. However, if the subject is preceded by each, any, or every, the verb will be singular.

EX. : My mother and father are old.
Each mother and father was recognized at the meeting.

10. When the conjunction or, nor, either...or, or neither...nor connect the parts of a compound subject, the verb will agree with the subject closer to it.

EX. : Either rain or snow is falling all over the state.
Neither titles nor honors are everlasting.
Neither the general nor his men are at the fort.
Either the apples or the large orange is for Jack.